

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICEsent 8/82  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Clubhouse of The Woman's Club of Topeka

AND/OR COMMON

Woman's Club Building (preferred)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

420 West Ninth

N/A, NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

N/A

VICINITY OF

No. 2, Jim Jeffries

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Kansas

CODE

20

COUNTY

Shawnee

CODE

177

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

N/A

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Manhattan Buildings, Inc.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

109 West Ninth

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

N/A

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas

66612

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Shawnee County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas 66612

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

N/A

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

N/A

CITY, TOWN

N/A

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Clubhouse of the Woman's Club of Topeka at the corner of Ninth street and Topeka avenue, is a three story brick building with cut stone trim. Completed in 1925, it can only be classified as 1920's eclecticism at its finest. The structure is 90 feet deep and 100 feet wide, and is located just one half block west of the State Capitol.

The exterior walls of the building are composed of brown mat-faced brick, and cut grey stone was employed for the trim. A simple stone frieze with a diamond-and-circle motif ornaments the top of the second story. There are also a stone watertable, a stone belt course under the second story windows, and stone keystones. The doors and windows on all facades are made of wood and are painted white. The roof to the rear of the third story is an overhanging hip roof with green clay tile. The front part of the third story has a glass-enclosed pergola between two monumental masonry piers, which lets out onto a roof terrace.

The main entrance faces south onto Ninth Street. Another major entrance leading to the auditorium and a secondary set of steps faces west onto Topeka avenue. The basement can be entered from the rear. There are loading doors on the east next to an alley, and a single door in the northeast corner of the building.

The main entranceway on the south is extremely monumental. It is emphasized by a two-story projecting and battered brick bay. A stone molding, incised with a geometric design, frames the centrally-located doorway and second story windows, thus uniting the two floors. A semielliptical arch supported by two brackets crowns the doorway. The double doorway is topped by a transom, and the entire group is finished with a molded stone surround. Beneath the bank of three second story windows is a stone carved with the words "Woman's Club." The entrance on the west facade consists of three sets of paired doors. These are framed by a stone surround, at the two upper corners of which are lion's heads. The stone surround is carved with a pattern of X's.

A metal marquee painted white and suspended by eyebolts shelters the southeast entrance which provides access from the parking spaces on the alley. Above the marquee is a round-arched stained glass window with a figurative design. Inside, this window illuminates a monumental staircase. Seven other round-arched stained glass windows having abstract designs along with symbolic panels are located at the auditorium level on the north side. Each unit consists of three narrow rectangular panels surmounted by an arched segment. Circular, symbolic panels are centered in each arched segment.

Inside, the first floor remains relatively unchanged from the time of its construction. All woodwork throughout the building is of white oak. On the first floor even the floor planks are white oak. The stairhall is finished with wainscoting and a molded cornice. The parlor has a fireplace, a ceiling divided into three coved panels by two large non-structural beams, and stained glass lights over the two doors which open onto the main stair hall.

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The wide, elaborately finished stair at the east end of the building leads from the first to the second floors. A handrail divides the stairway up to the first landing where the stair splits into two ascending sections. The staircase is crowned at the second floor level by a curved balustrade joining the separate sections.

The rooms on the second floor were, until recently, used as a dining hall, kitchen, meeting rooms, and library. The large room on the third floor was a ball room with a spring dance floor. The south side of the third floor is a roof terrace.

#### ALTERATIONS

The entire building has recently been adapted for use as office space. Most work that has been done is reversible, the original materials having been covered up where necessary, rather than removed. The major spaces on all floors have retained their original configurations.

The first floor has undergone the fewest changes. The floor level in the auditorium has been raised to two inches above the former stage level. A drop ceiling has been installed, but cuts off short of the stained glass windows on the north wall so that they can be seen. Drop ceilings have been installed throughout the second floor.

On the third floor, the balconies and the spring floor in the ball room have been retained, but are covered. The spring floor has been blocked for its intended use as offices, but these can be easily removed should someone wish to use it again as a dance floor.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES **1924-25**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

**J. M. Leeper/Frank C. Squires**

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Clubhouse of the Woman's Club of Topeka designed by Topeka architect Frank C. Squires, is a significant example of the "free eclectic" architectural style popular in the 1920's. It is associated with an important local organization which has been "first to give to schools, hospitals, traveling libraries, civic and charitable organizations." In the same year that the building was being constructed, the club was praised as a great asset to the state and city, and was enjoying a period of great prosperity.

In 1897 a federation of the woman's clubs of Topeka and vicinity was organized. The group chose a more formal title, the Topeka Federation of Women, in 1912. The organization became the Woman's Club of Topeka in 1916. The club promoted other forms of musical education and entertainment. The club was praised for donations of pictures and statuary to local schools as well as donation of books and magazines to many other institutions. After the famous 1903 flood the group raised money to aid in the relief of the disaster victims. The Woman's Club was also instrumental in the effort to introduce manual training and domestic science into the curriculum of the public schools. During World War I, the club members devoted most of their attention to "war work," that is, activities benefitting servicemen and gathering material for the war effort. A newspaper report in 1924, which described the club's achievements said, "the Woman's Club is one of Topeka's assets as a dependable organization, alive to the city's best interest and ready to help in any progressive work." After the war, interest in constructing a permanent home was strong. A preliminary plan designed by Frank C. Squires, husband of the chairman of the fundraising committee, was presented to Mrs. W. A. McCarter, president of the club, in February. The club bought four lots on the northeast corner of Ninth and Topeka in July for \$9,000. During the next year the club bought two more lots for \$4,000. Raising the money to actually build, however, required more organization and cooperation.

A perspective drawing of the future Woman's Clubhouse was published in the Topeka Capital December 25, 1921. Ground was not broken for the building until October 1, 1923. After completion of the foundation, work ceased for the winter. The project began with the laying of the cornerstone April 26, 1924. The building was formally opened one year later in the spring of 1925.

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The architect, Frank C. Squires, was an active Topeka designer. In his early career, he had trained with three firms, including that of the famous early Kansas architect J. G. Haskell. Squires entered a partnership with another notable Kansas designer, J. C. Holland, in 1898. By the 1920's however, Squires had developed his own practice.

Squires' own description of the clubhouse is indicative of the "free eclectic" and regional orientation of much architectural design of this period: "The clubhouse is 'free and easy' in type of architecture and would be called midwestern in style, if any classification were to be applied to it at all." The architect's enthusiasm was sweeping; he called it one of the finest structures of its kind in the United States and probably the finest in any city from Chicago to the Pacific Coast.

When it was finally completed, the clubhouse cost \$200,000. J. M. Leeper was the contractor; George Rinner his assistant. Irvin Pribble installed the plumbing and Jordan Electric Company the wiring.

In 1925 the Woman's Club had over 400 members and included representatives from every important club in the city. The Topeka Capital predicted that the clubhouse "may be used as a center for social, artistic, and civic organizations of the town and will always be a source of civic pride." Five years later, the clubhouse provided meeting rooms for the Topeka Art Guild, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Friends of Art, the Business and Professional Woman's Club, art classes and a dancing club. Besides these specific uses, the clubhouse was also intended to serve as a "hospitable center for the club women of Topeka and Kansas."

In 1926 the Union Pacific Magazine reported, "It was not until after the building was completed and in use that the club found out, as it is believed, that it is the largest club house of its kind west of the Mississippi River." Over the years the Woman's Club has experienced steadily declining membership. They recently sold the building and it is now ready for use as offices.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.

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Topeka Journal 8-17-1929, 9-6-1919

The Union Pacific Magazine. (November, 1926). Omaha, Nebraska

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Berrett, Howard D. Who's who in Topeka. (Topeka, Kansas: ...ams Brothers Publishing Company, 1905).

Topeka Capital. 5-23-1919, 8-5-1919, 12-25-1921, 10-2-1923  
4-22-1924, 4-17-1927, 10-30-1925

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

Topeka quadrangle

1:24,000 scale

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 268440 4325065  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C         

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D         

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies approximately one acre, beginning at the northeast corner of Ninth Street and Topeka Avenue, proceeding east .08 mile, then north .08 mile, then west .08 mile to Topeka Avenue. Lot numbers 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288.

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian  
Julie A. Wortman, Historic Preservation Specialist; Dale Nimz, Program Assist.

ORGANIZATION

Kansas State Historical Society--Historic Preservation Dept. 1-8-82

STREET & NUMBER

120 West Tenth

CITY OR TOWN

Topeka

DATE

TELEPHONE

913-296-3251

STATE

Kansas 66612

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Executive Director, Ks. State Historical Society

DATE

Jan. 8, 1982

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

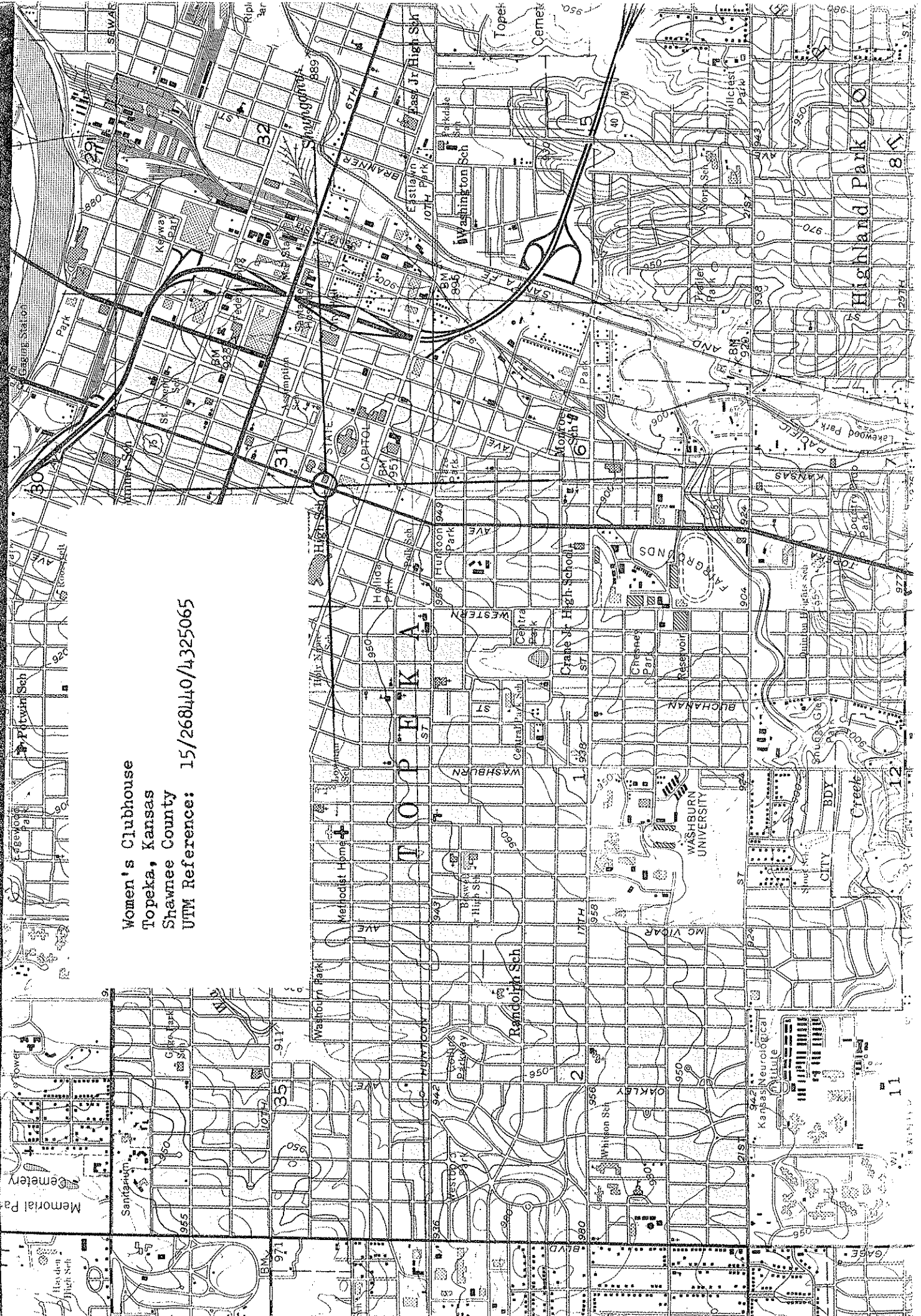
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER





Women's Clubhouse  
Topeka, Kansas  
Shawnee County  
UTM Reference: 15/268440/4325065